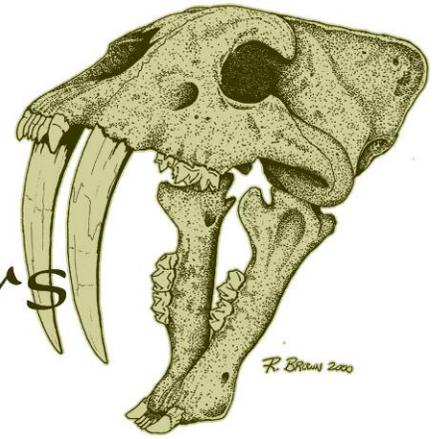


NEWS

Florida Fossil Hunters

Volume 20, Number 8

September 2010



Prez Sez

I'm grateful every day to know that the future of fossil hunting will be brighter and more enticing than today. As new discoveries create deeper questions and new [scientific branches](#), we must equip ourselves with the knowledge and experience to answer these questions and to prune the new leaves a bit. I am very grateful to [Alex Hastings](#) and his fellow graduate students who journeyed from Gainesville (by way of Colombia) to join us this past month. Congratulations to Alex on his fantastic new crocodylian species. If you weren't able to join us, Alex is responsible for the discovery and description of two new species of prehistoric dyrososaurs. Remember this moment, because he's going to discover many more.

I love reading about new species being named from scant fossil finds. It always astonishes me that with so few pieces of a puzzle, we can construct an animal that is significantly different from anything else we've seen before. Strangely, to hear from the pros in action, its just another Tuesday.

In an article released by [ScienceDaily on August 31st](#), (guess when I wrote this!) a team at University of Bristol investigated the taxonomic cues of each "Evolution Revolution™" fossil find and discovered that usually, there isn't as much excitement among the researchers as there is among the Marketing Department. Paleontologists are rarely surprised anymore—but we do still get giddy when we find something—anything—after a long, dry dig season. But why do we feign shock and awe, like a kid who peeked at their Christmas presents?

Take for example the jaws of [Sinornithosaurus](#), quickly rising to the top of everybody's favorite dinosaur list. Definitive colors, endothermy, and stripes aside—what made this dinosaur a media darling was the identification of grooves for venom injection in its fangs—a trait never before seen. [The crowds went wild!](#) All the [major news outlets](#) carried the story! *Sinorth... Sinoni.... Sithorn.... (heck with it..)* *Fangosaurus* toys instantly went into production! But to many of the scientists, that wasn't much of a surprise.

Zoologists understand that every animal alive today serves a purpose in its ecosystem. Ecologists know that if a species serving that purpose goes extinct, everything else depending on that species is disrupted and chaos ensues. For that reason, similar animals evolved to fill similar roles. Every role that exists today also existed in some form or another ages ago, and we simply haven't found all the evidence yet. Paleontologists understand that part better than most.

For every venomous predator, or every spray-defending prey, there is a fossil that is waiting to be uncovered. Know that the answers ARE out there, and we will find them.

It's only a matter of time. Happy Hunting!
Jimmy Waldron, President,
Florida Fossil Hunters

Coming Events

MEETINGS SATURDAY

at the Orlando Science Center

Sept. 18, 2010

3:00 Club Meeting

Sept. 20, 2010

Deadline for Tshirt orders

FFH 2010 Fossil Fair

October 9th and 10th

See Page 3 and 4 for all the details.

November 20th, 2010

2:00pm Kids' Fossil Blast

3:00pm Club Meeting

For more info...

www.floridafossilhunter.com

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Fragments

September Meeting Theme - Favorite Fossils

Bring your favorite fossils and whatever you've found recently for all of us to admire.....we never outgrow show & tell. We love to actually see fossils, learn about them and hear how they were found.

Besides, everyone who brings some fossils in will receive 100 extra fossil bucks!

We'll also have sign-up sheets for volunteering at the Fossil Fair and T-shirt order forms.

The Fall FPS Meeting is going to be October 15, 16, and 17 in Marianna, Florida. There will be an informal get together and dinner Friday evening.

The field trip (Oct. 16) is to an early Miocene locality where the Chipola Formation is exposed along the banks of Farley Creek. The fossils found here are mainly Mollusks (Snails and Clams) but there is also the occasional Echinoderm, coral, and even sharks teeth.

Collecting gear needed includes: Sturdy shoes that can get wet (e.g. Old Sneakers or dive booties; no flip flops), small shovel or spade, rock hammer, screens(1/4" mesh or smaller), awl/screwdriver/oyster-knife, large brim hat, sun screen, bug spray, sack lunch. There is also a planned dinner Saturday evening that will include two presentations, raffle, short auction, and FPS publication sales.

I will have more info about hotels, restaurants, and other activities soon.

-Alex Kittle, Florida Paleontological Society
Florida Museum of Natural History

Peace River... Had to happen.....after all the rain we had in August, the Peace River registered at 13 ft and rising at the Zolfo Springs gauge. Guess we'll all have to find something else to do while the water subsides to a reasonable level.

Kids' Fossil Blast

I want to thank Griffith Wittschen, Jeremy Smith, and Julianna Pacheco for bringing in their pictures, fossils, and shells and sharing their experiences with the group. We really enjoyed it.

We won't have a meeting in October....we're having the Fossil Fair! There will be plenty of activities for the kids. We can use you more experienced kids to volunteer at the demonstration area and the Kids' Pit. To volunteer your time at the Fossil Fair on Oct. 9th and 10th, email Bonnie at bjrb48@netzero.com or call her at 352-429-1058.

Next Fossil Blast will be on Saturday, November 20th, at 2 pm.

Vulcan Mine Field Trip

The first field trip to Vulcan Mine near Brooksville since last spring will be on **Saturday, September 11th**. Kathy Munroe will be the Trip Leader. This is one of the few places where kids are allowed in to fossil hunt. Be sure to stay with them since there are steep cliffs, sharp rocks, and small sinkholes.

The next field trip to Vulcan for our club will be on **Saturday, November 13th**.

You **MUST** be a member of the club for insurance purposes to participate in this field trip.

Meet on the driveway loop near the entrance to the Mine by 8:30 am to sign releases before we are escorted into the mine around 9 am. We get to drive our vehicles in so you can have your coolers, snacks, and equipment handy while you hunt. They usually allow us to dig until noon and sometimes people can stay till 2 pm.

All of the participants **MUST** be escorted into and out of the mine. Do not leave on your own since it is easy to become lost.

Directions: From Orlando take Hwy. 50 west to Brooksville. Turn right onto US 98 north and go approximately 10 miles. Vulcan Mine will be on the left (west) side of 98. The address is 16313 Ponce De Leon Blvd., Brooksville, for those of you that want to download a map.

This is mostly surface collecting with occasionally a little digging to pry out a specimen. Bring a small trowel or screwdriver or rock hammer, and a bucket to put your fossils and rocks into. You may want to bring small containers and tissue for fragile fossils.

Wear a hat, sturdy shoes, long pants (some of the rocks are sharp), and sunscreen. Bring lots of water and/or drinks and some snacks or lunch to eat.

We find mostly echinoids and sometimes sea urchins, pieces of bone, or other fossils are found. We also find chert rocks. This is the material that the Indians used to make their arrowheads and tools.

To sign up or for additional info, email Kathy at munroek@embarqmail.com or call her at 407-846-7382.

Florida Fossil Hunters

Fossil Fair

The Fossil Fair is almost here. I have received some emails regarding when and where people want to work. Most have just given a time slot, which is just fine. But we are far from having enough people. We don't want to wear out the ones that **volunteer** all the time, so the more people that help, the less hours (or days) the others will have to work.

We all like to roam around the fair, and that is totally understandable, but if you can offer just a few hours, then you can rest the remainder of the year..... or not. So far, Sunday seems to be a day that we are currently short, although there are openings on Saturday also.

We also need some "sleep with the fossils" people for **security** on Friday night and Saturday night. There is a restroom in our building unlike last year, so going outside during the night won't be an issue.

Covered dishes will also be helpful because we seem to have no problem emptying the containers. Guess helping burns a lot of calories. Also, it is good for the health, makes one a better fossil hunter, sharpens the brain, and may even work better than watermelon and raw oysters!

Donations for the kid's pit and silent auctions are appreciated! They may be brought directly to the fair.

We need helpers for Friday **set up**.

Also, anyone may print out a **flyer** from the club website and stick it somewhere. They won't be good after the 10th of October so please try to use them now. Maybe a library or any other place you might think of. In my Casselberry library, I just had to turn it in at the desk with my phone number and then they get it approved and post it on the bulletin board. Happy dealers make for a good turnout, all the way around.

Valerie: VJFirst@aol.com | 407-699-9274



HELP WANTED

People with smiles to work part-time at: Admission door collecting money, sitting at Membership table answering questions, helping at the Kids' Pit, and putting out items at the Silent Auction. On the job training available. Pay is in valuable Fossil Bucks which can be used at our fossil auctions.

A couple guys to handle security Friday night and/or Saturday night.....big fossil bucks can be earned for sleeping on the job! There is absolutely no truth to the rumor that the fossils come alive after dark.

Young people willing to share their enthusiasm with other kids at the demonstration area. Not only do you get fossil bucks, you can use these hours to fulfill your school volunteer requirements.

FOOD NEEDED

One of the great perks of volunteering at the Fossil Fair is the free food. The club supplies the sandwich fixings....the rest of us bring snacks, salads, side dishes, desserts, etc. Please bring something to share....and your appetite, too.

FOSSILS WANTED

Those extra and not-so-perfect fossils that have been cluttering your house or garage can become an incredible treasure for the kids at the Dig Pit. Need some minerals and fossils and related items for the Silent Auction as well.

2010 Fossil T-shirts

Russell has come up with incredible design for this year's shirts. Since we ended up with so many shirts left over from last year, we are only going to print the number of shirts we get orders for.

The shirts will be a light green, pocket shirts will be grey, and kids' shirts will be light blue with the usual sabercat design on the front and Russell's drawing on the back.

IF YOU WANT A SHIRT, WE MUST RECEIVE YOUR ORDER FORM BY SEPTEMBER 20TH.

Name: _____

Email or phone#: _____

Mark the number of shirts you want per size.

Kid Small _____ **Kid Med** _____
Adult Small _____ **Med** _____ **Lg** _____
XL _____ **2X** _____ **3X** _____

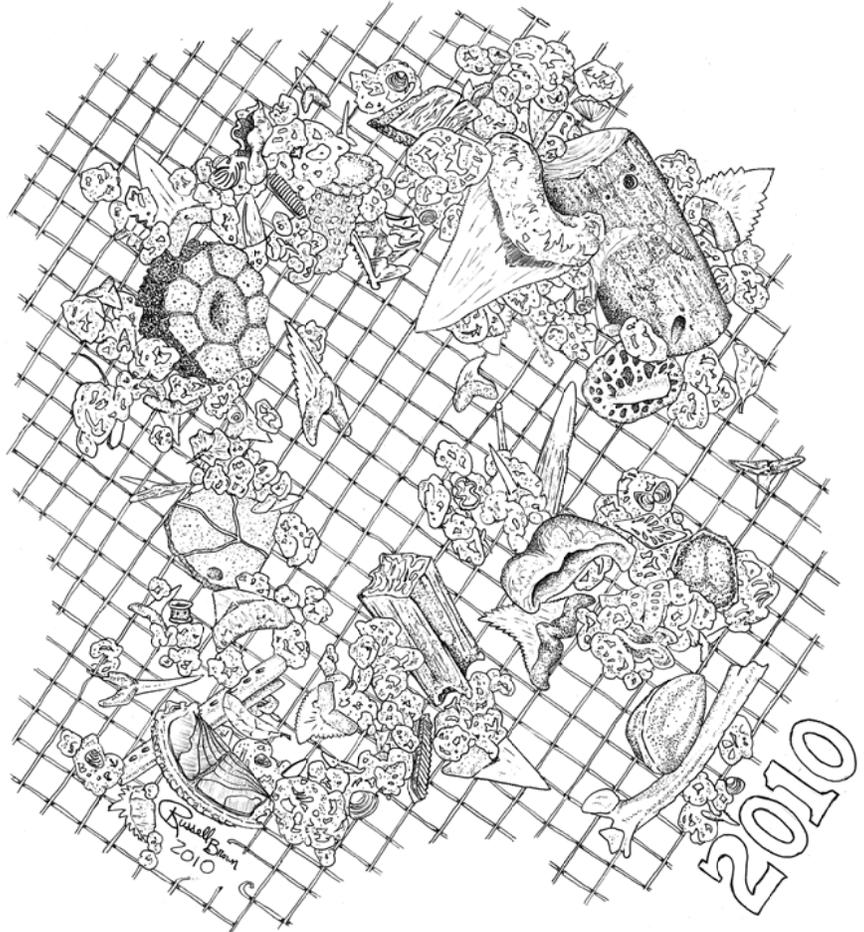
Adult w/Pocket-

Small _____ **Med** _____ **Lg** _____
XL _____ **2X** _____

Total number of shirts ordered _____
 @ \$10.00 each = \$ _____ due

I will NOT be ordering extra t-shirts this year.

So if you want one, we must receive your order by **Sept. 20th**. You can fill out an order form at the September meeting, email me with your order bjrb48@netzero.com or call me at 352-429-1058.

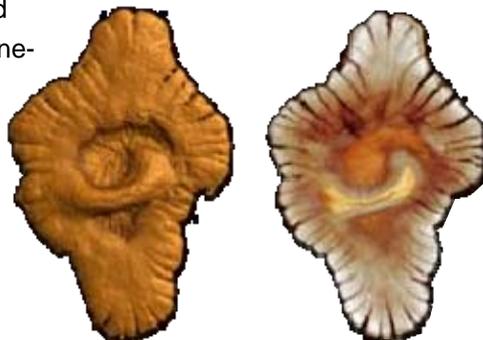


Evidence of Life from 2 Billion Years Ago Discovered

A fossil bed in Gabon has yielded more than 250 fossils from 2.1 billion years ago. Until now, the first complex life forms dated from around 600 million years ago.

These fossils are various shaped and sized multicellular life forms, which means that one-celled creatures existed even further back than 2 billion years.

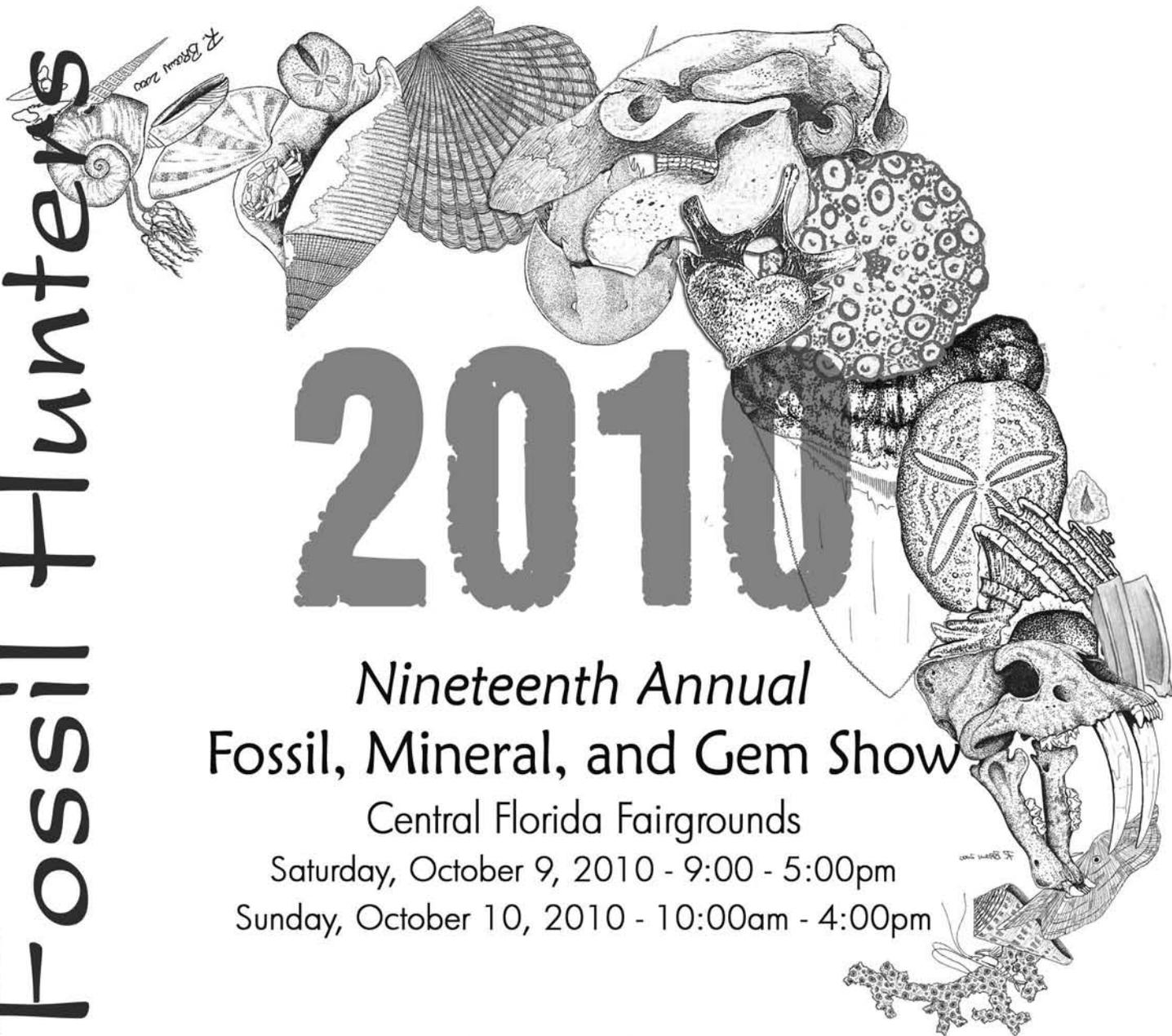
For further details of the discovery and research techniques, visit <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2010/06/100630171711.htm>



Remodeling the Ancient World

The Dinosaur and Fossil area of the **Orlando Science Center** is undergoing a big renovation. Exhibits will be moved around and refreshed and new carpet is being installed. Be sure to check it out and look for the displays that Russell has installed and the new one that Valerie will be putting in.

Florida Fossil Hunters



Nineteenth Annual Fossil, Mineral, and Gem Show

Central Florida Fairgrounds

Saturday, October 9, 2010 - 9:00 - 5:00pm

Sunday, October 10, 2010 - 10:00am - 4:00pm

Fossils, Rocks
and Artifacts

\$4.00 Adults
\$1.00 Children

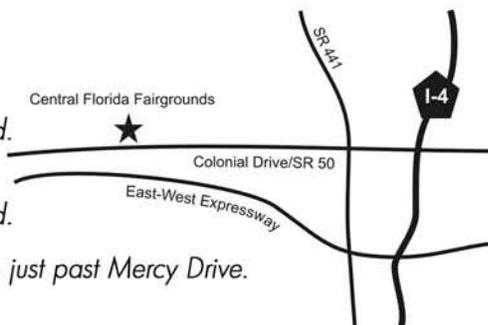
Hourly Silent
Auctions

Kids can dig for their own fossils

From Tampa - I-4 to Orlando, take
Colonial Drive (Hwy 50) exit Westbound.

From Daytona - I-4 to Orlando, take
Colonial Drive (Hwy 50) exit Westbound.

The fairgrounds will be on the right side, just past Mercy Drive.



For more information on the 2010 Fossil Fair contact us by
email at FossilFair@floridafossilhunters.com, call 407-699-9274,
or check the website at www.floridafossilhunters.com

PREHISTORIC PINE HILLS

Prehistoric Pine Hills, Part One

I'm lucky...being a Florida native, born down at the old Orange Memorial Hospital and growing up here in Orlando. I always had a love for the outdoors. Most weekends my Dad, after working hard all week, would load up the camper and take us all camping. He and his father taught me a lot of what I know about the outdoors - not only how to enjoy it, but how to respect it, too. Got to explore Central Florida...nothing better than a long hike, bike ride, or boat trip. Like most kids, we'd keep Mom entertained with all of our "treasures" from the wild. Yes, we had the usual dog (Toby) but also everything else that swam, crawled, slithered, flew, or burrowed. You name it, we brought it home. Even horseshoe crabs became temporary pets....with leashes made of string. Of course, we also got bites, stitches, and scratches...but mostly good memories and lots of "hands-on" experience.

Sadly, I watched a lot of that old Florida disappear as I grew up. Started working full time at 16 but kept getting outdoors as much as possible...bass fishing was my passion for years. Back in the 80's I thought about working for Florida Wildlife Management but it didn't pay much and I had the opportunity to work for the Post Office. Mom campaigned hard for the Postal Service and I've been working there ever since.

Just as anyone else who has worked at one place for a long time knows, you meet people and co-workers who eventually become your friends. I've met people whose friendship ended as soon as we said hello; others have lasted a lifetime.

One day at work this tall strange friend of mine, who'd I'd invite fishing, said he'd just joined a fossil club which met at Robert E. Lee school every so often and invited to come to a meeting. I blew it off at first. After working all day, living by myself, I had plenty to keep me busy.....drawing a little bit, just starting as a school volunteer, fishing when I could. Always felt that yearning to be outdoors more though. Later on, Mike Trapp, the strange friend, mentioned that he wanted to go to Lake Apopka or an old clay pit in Pine Hills to hunt for fossil shark teeth. For a moment, I pondered if my friend was crazy, but he assured me that he was only crazy at home.

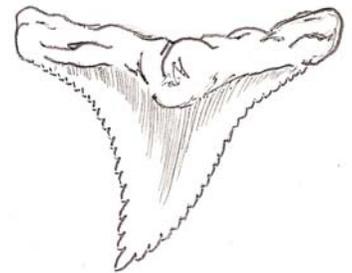
Like most kids I loved dinosaurs, but I never thought of fossils being in Florida. From what I had seen on nature shows and in books, fossils were out West in the Badlands and in foreign countries. But fossils in Florida?...This I would have to look into. Besides, I'd be outdoors.

One Sunday morning, I loaded my old pick-up truck and headed west....to Pine Hills. Mike had told me what to keep an eye out for and, after a lot of looking, I found this deep area in the pit. You could see a few spots where people had piled gravel next to holes. So I headed down and started digging. Now, I've dug many a hole before but this was like dig-

ging into South Georgia red clay. It was so sticky, I had to hit my shovel on a tree stump to shake the clay off the shovel. I dug...and I dug. It took a couple days of hard digging surrounded by the smell of kerosene and the biting deer flies and mosquitoes, to clear an area big enough to walk into. Finally after removing about 5 ft. of clay ...overburden, as it's called in the field....I hit a layer of pebbly phosphate ranging from just inches deep to 2 ft. in other areas. Under that was a hard limestone layer. To add to the fun, water would seep into the hole, so I had to bail it out with a bucket every half hour or so.

One day when I was out there, this lanky kid showed up on his bike with a backpack and a shovel. Figured he had to have a hole. He showed up again every so often...probably skipping school like I was skipping work (well, at least, I called in sick). We wouldn't talk much other than "hey, man". We'd watch each other, making sure we knew where the other was, looking for weakness, sizing each other up. Out in the woods, you always kept your eye out for people...strange people.

Then one afternoon, I found my first shark's tooth. The clouds parted, a ray of light shot through shining on just me and the tooth, angels could be heard singing and trumpets blared in the distance. Like a tidal wave I was overwhelmed with this thing that would change my life forever. It was a beauty, too....a perfect hemiprinitis about 1-1/2 inches long.



The kid showed up a couple hours later. By then I had found a tupperware full of treasures. He also had a bag of teeth he had found. We looked at each others' finds, talked, laughed and started a lifelong friendship.

Jeremy Smith and I didn't know that our adventure had just begun.

A Big Thanks.....

to Alex Hastings for his wonderful presentation on the Colombian crocodiles. He has given us a link to the publication of the first new species, published in the Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology. Club members can get it for free at: http://striweb.si.edu/publications/PDFs/STRI-W_Jaramillo_Hasting_2010_crocCerrejon.pdf

Florida Fossil Hunters

is a fun and educational group whose goal is to further our understanding of the prehistory of Florida. We encourage family participation and welcome explorers of all ages.

Membership is \$17 per year. Other household members may be included at no charge.

Meetings are held the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm, check the website for the location.

Officers:

President	Jimmy Waldron	(386) 212-5814
Vice President	Russell Brown	(352) 429-1058
Secretary	Glory Kerr	
Treasurer	Sara Morey	(407) 353-8675

Chairs:

Education	Melissa Cole	(407) 834-5615
Field Trips		
Fossil Fair	Valerie First	(407) 699-9274
Fossil Auctions	Dave Dunaway	(407) 786-8844
Fossil Bucks	Dave Dunaway	(407) 786-8844
Fossil Lotto	Ed Metrin	(407) 321-7462
Auctioneer	Roy Singer	(407) 645-0200
Historian	Valerie First	(407) 699-9274
Librarian	Kathy Munroe	(407) 846-7382
Membership	Joanne Maio	(407) 375-3635
Newsletter	Bonnie Cronin	(352) 429-1058
	Elise Cronin-Hurley	(407) 929-6297
Photography	John Heinsen	(407) 291-7672
Webmaster	Elise Cronin-Hurley	(407) 929-6297
	elise@liseydreams.com	

Board of Paul Bordenkircher (407) 687-3843

Directors: Russell Brown (352) 429-1058
 Melissa Cole (407) 834-5615
 Dave Dunaway (407) 786-8844
 Ed Metrin (407) 321-7462
 John Jelks (407) 568-5558
 Roy Singer (407) 645-0200

Membership Application

Names: _____

Associate Members: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: Zip: _____

e-mail: _____

____ New ____ Renewal

Please list any interests, experience, talents or just plain enthusiasm, which you would like to offer to the club:

Membership is \$17 per year. Our membership year runs from January to December. All renewals are done in December and January.

Please make your checks payable to:

Florida Fossil Hunters
 Post Office Box 540404
 Orlando, Florida 32854-0404

Associate members are people in the same household, included at no extra charge, 2 adult votes per household.

Newsletter Policy

Articles must be submitted by the first of the month to be included in that month's newsletter. These can be mailed to the above Post Office Box or e-mailed to: elise@liseydreams.com. Articles can be sent as text in the e-mail or in Microsoft Word files (*.doc).

Please note in subject of email 'FFH'.

Florida Fossil Hunters Mark Your Calendar

September 18, 2010

3:00 Meeting

September 20, 2010

Deadline for T-shirt orders

Fossil Fair

October 9th and 10th

October 15, 16, and 17

Fall FPS Meeting

November 20, 2010

2:00pm Kids' Fossil Blast

3:00pm Meeting

Vulcan Mine field trips

September 11, 2010

November 13, 2010

See page 2 for more info



Join Our new facebook group:

Search [Florida Fossil Hunters](#)

Be Green

We are *emailing* the newsletter each month. If you want to participate, just email Bonnie at bjrb48@netzero.com or sign up at the meeting. If you want to continue to receive a paper newsletter in the mail, you don't have to do anything.



See page 2-3 for more information on events.

Visit us online at www.floridafossilhunters.com

Articles and comments should be sent to: elise@liseydreams.com

Florida Fossil Hunters

Post Office Box 540404

Orlando, Florida 32854-040



Florida Fossil Hunters News